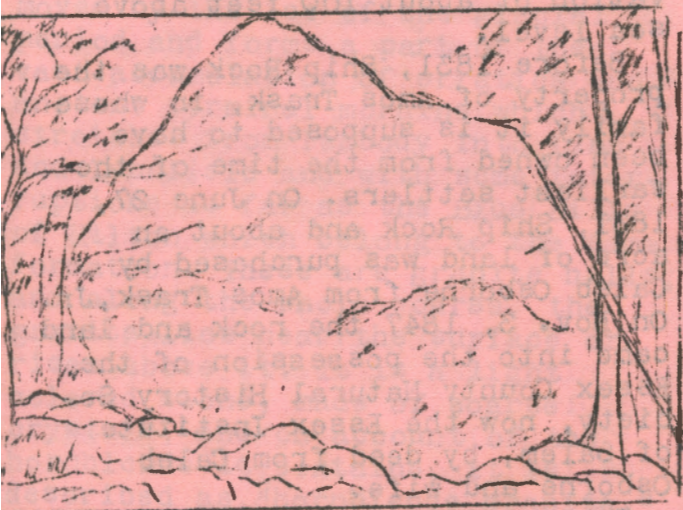


SHIP ROCK

PEABODY, MASSACHUSETTS



Compiled by Ruth H. Hill  
for the  
Peabody Chamber of Commerce  
June 29, 1951

There is a road leading from 131 Lynnfield Street, Peabody, to the hill where Ship Rock is perched upon a ledge at an elevation of about 100 feet above sea level.

Before 1831, Ship Rock was the property of Amos Trask, in whose family it is supposed to have been owned from the time of the earliest settlers. On June 27, 1831, Ship Rock and about an acre of land was purchased by Caleb Osborne from Amos Trask, Jr. On Nov. 3, 1847 the rock and land came into the possession of the Essex County Natural History Society, now the Essex Institute of Salem, by deed from Caleb Osborne and wife.

The origin of the name of Ship Rock is uncertain. There is a tradition that certain sailors, many years ago, used it as a station to watch the departure of the ship from which they had deserted in Salem Harbor. It is also supposed to have some resemblance to a ship when seen from certain points of view.



Ship Rock, an immense block of hornblende granite, is one of the largest boulders known. It belongs to the largest class of boulders moved by the ice of the glacial period and forms a part of the vast accumulation of erratics and ancient terminal moraine which stretches from Peabody into Lynn and Lynnfield and with some interruptions as far as the Blue Hills of Milton which belong to the same formation. These are granite hills, and along the whole course, the granite lies near the surface or rises above it. It is a light colored stone, made of coarse crystals, and on account of the hornblende it contains, it is described as "hornblende granite." The dark spots characteristic of this stone are the mineral hornblende.

On account of its crystalline structure this granite splits out of the quarry in comparatively regular blocks. All the quarries in Peabody were in this range of hills. The Lexington Monument at

the corner of Main and Washington Streets and also the base of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument on Peabody Square are good specimens of this granite.

The dimensions of Ship Rock are 45 feet in length by 20 feet in height. Its weight has been estimated to be about 2200 tons. Its source is thought to have been a ledge of similar rock about one half mile to the north west.

#### Bibliography.

The following list of books, pamphlets and manuscripts were consulted:

"The Geology of Peabody, Massachusetts, and vicinity"

by John W. Hudson.

"Manuscript on Ship Rock"

by John W. Hudson.

"The Essex Institute Historical Collections"

"The Physical Geography, Geology, Minerology and Paleontology of Essex County, Massachusetts"

by John Henry Sears.

Published by the Essex Institute.